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PAURAVA AND ALEXANDER

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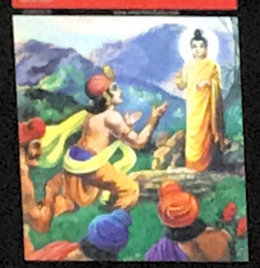

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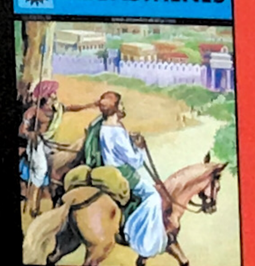

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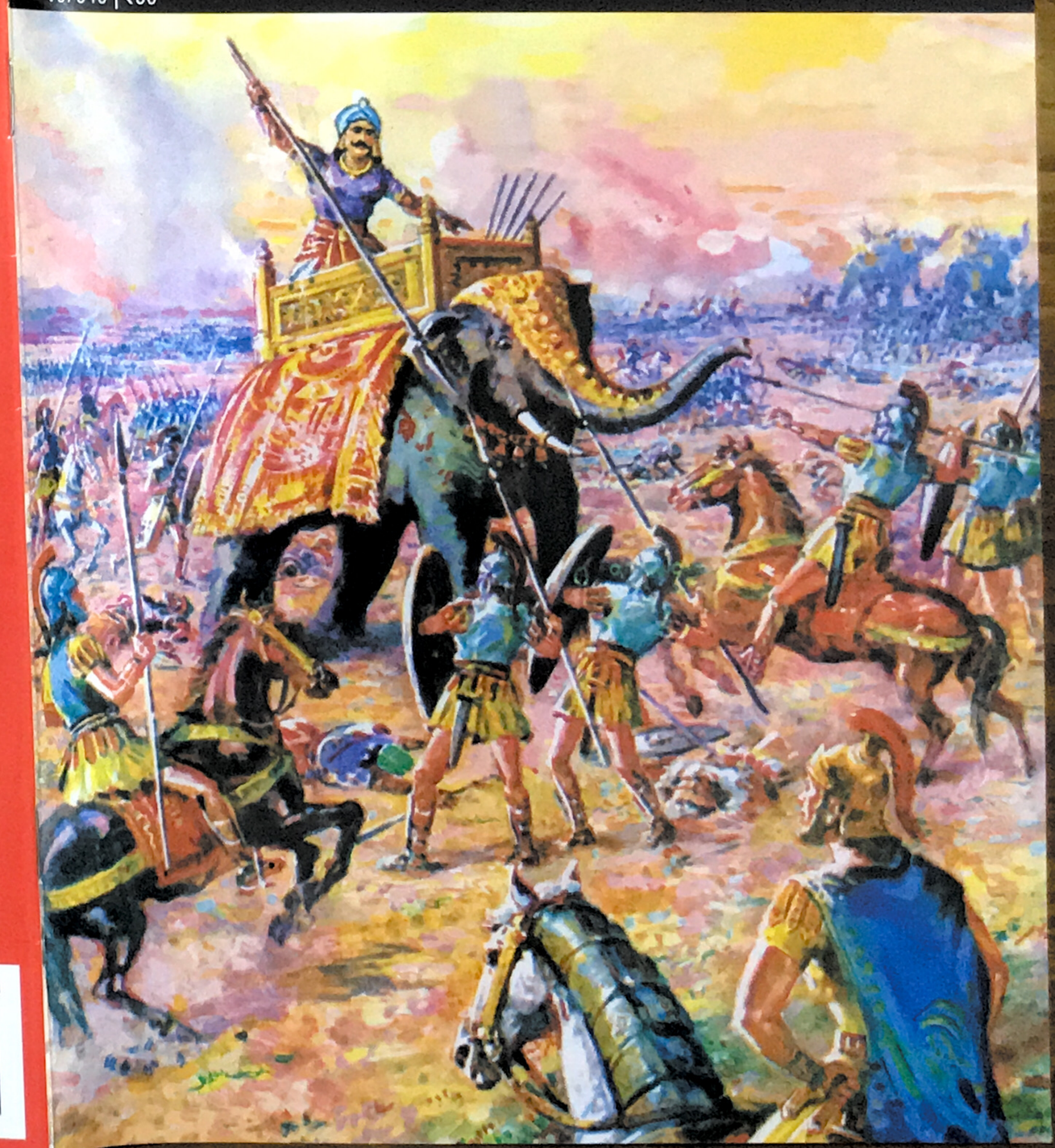
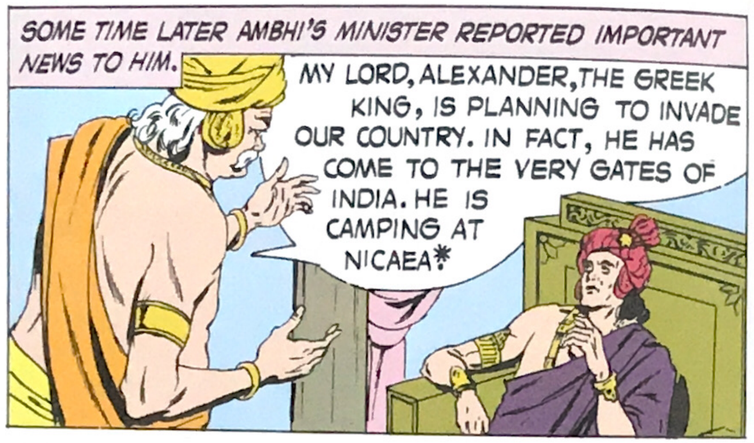


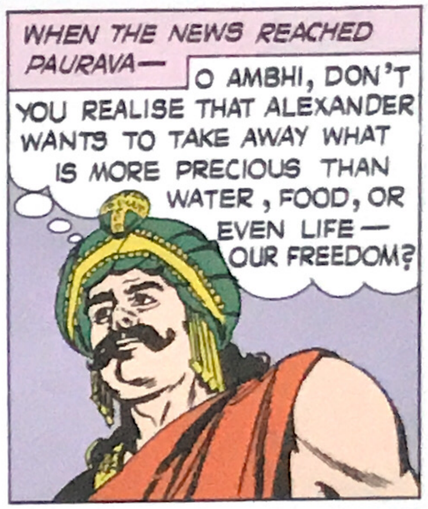
PAURAVA AND ALEXANDER

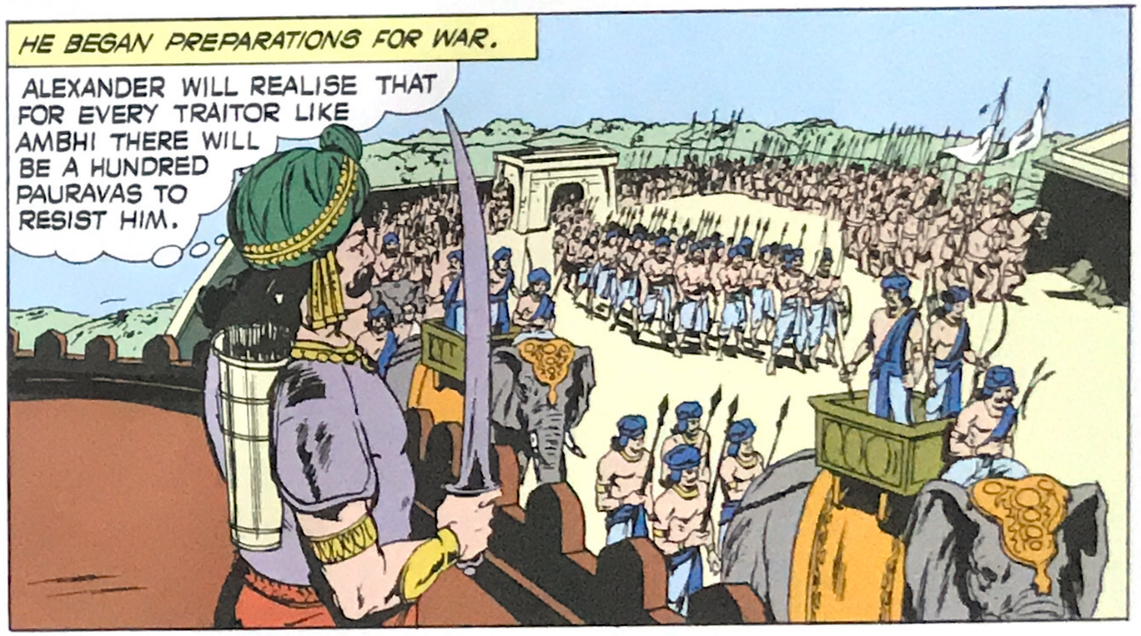
MORE THAN TWO THOUSAND YEARS AGO, KING PAURAVA* STOOD ON THE BANK OF THE JHELUM, WATCHING HIS MEN PURSUE HIS RIVAL, AMBHI, THE KING OF TAKSHASHILA,+ WHO WAS FLEEING FROM THE BATTLEFIELD.

*HE RULED THE TERRITORY BETWEEN THE RIVERS JHELUM AND RAVI IN PUNJAB.
+THE MODERN TAXILA IS NOW IN PAKISTAN.

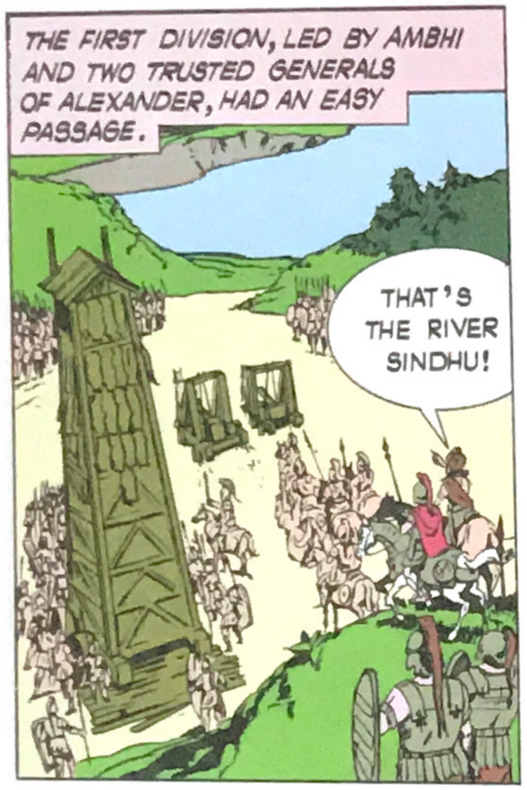


* AN OUTPOST OUTSIDE KABUL

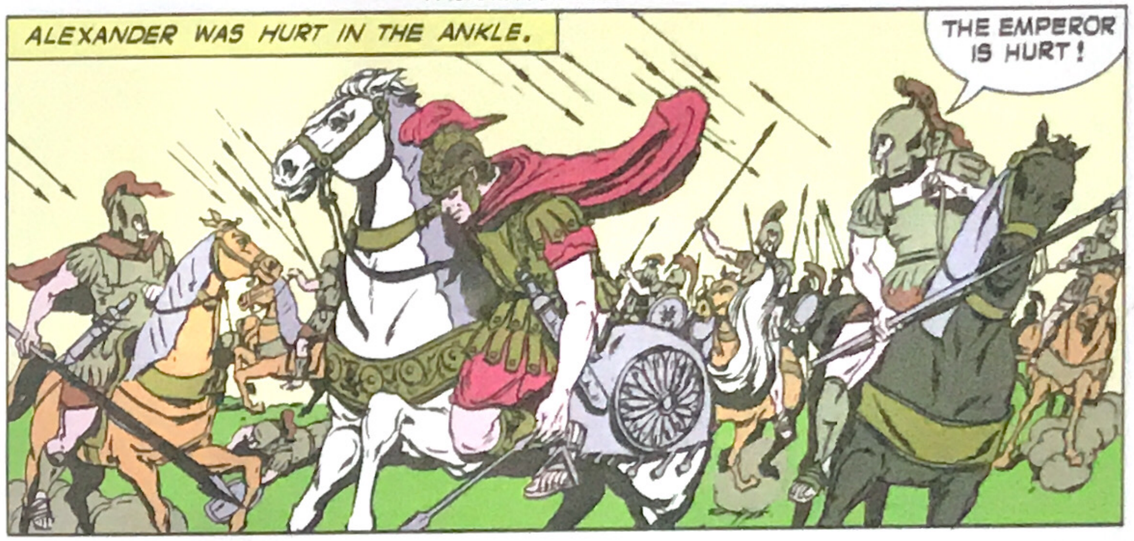


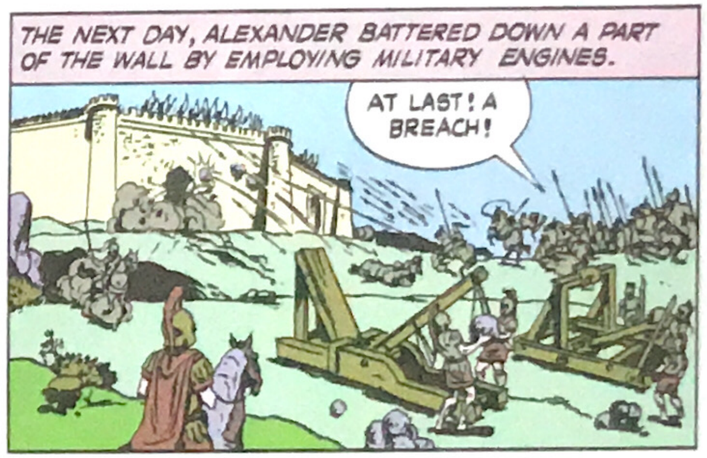


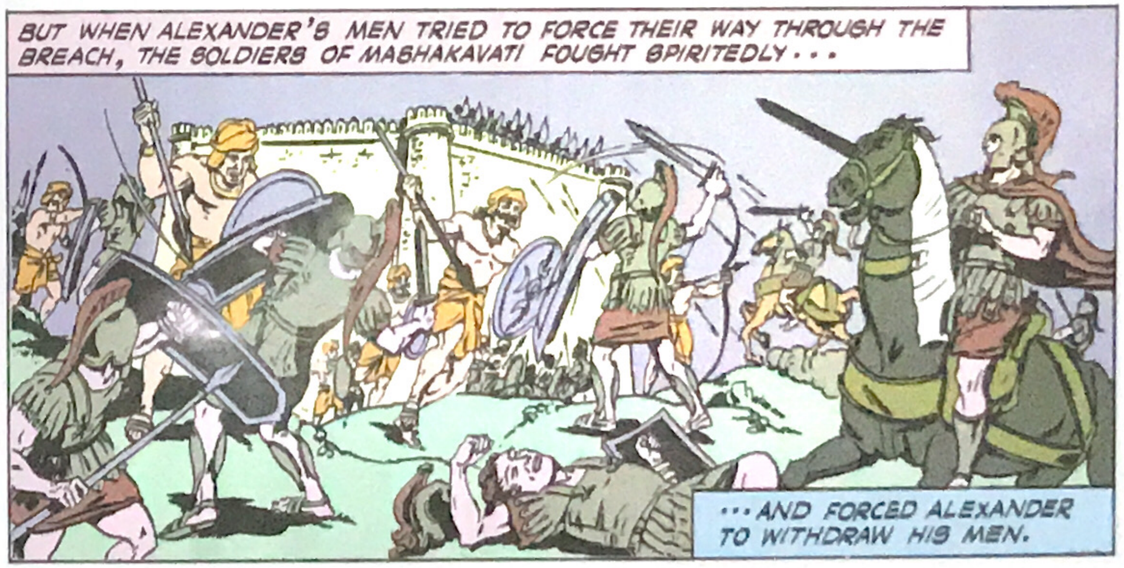
* THE RIVER SINDHU



* GREEKS REFERRED TO THIS PLACE AS MASSAGA

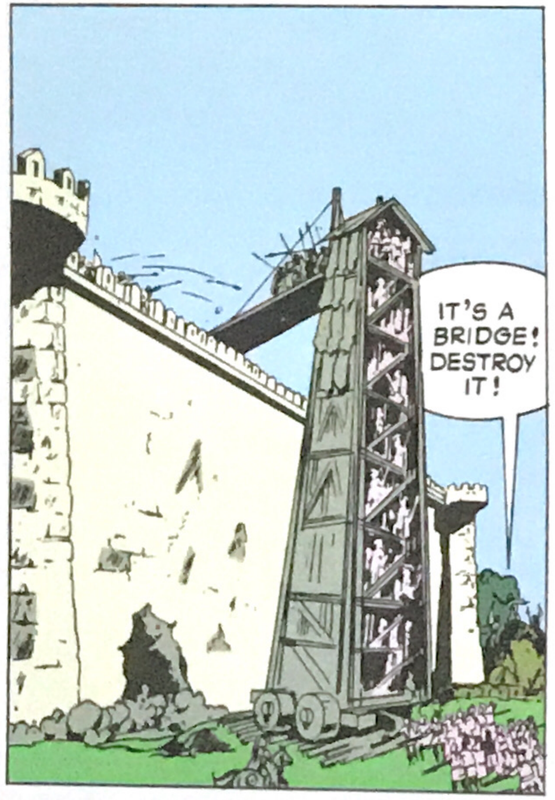


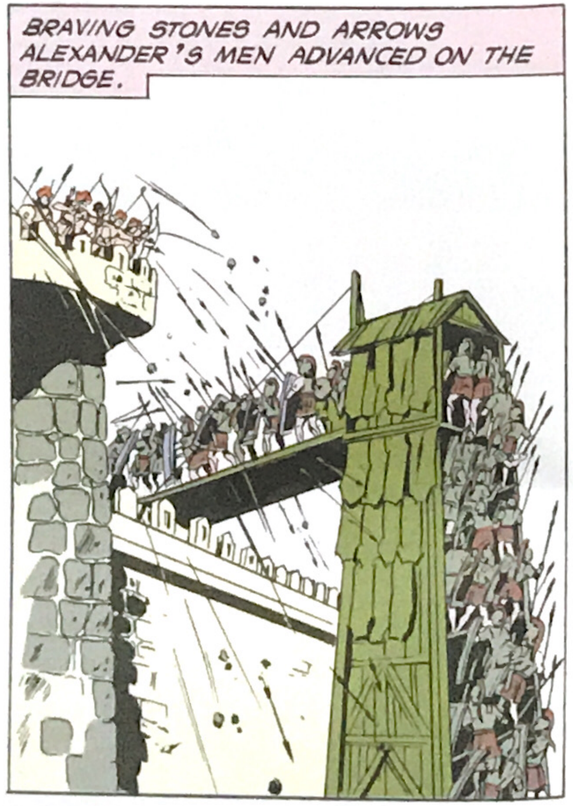


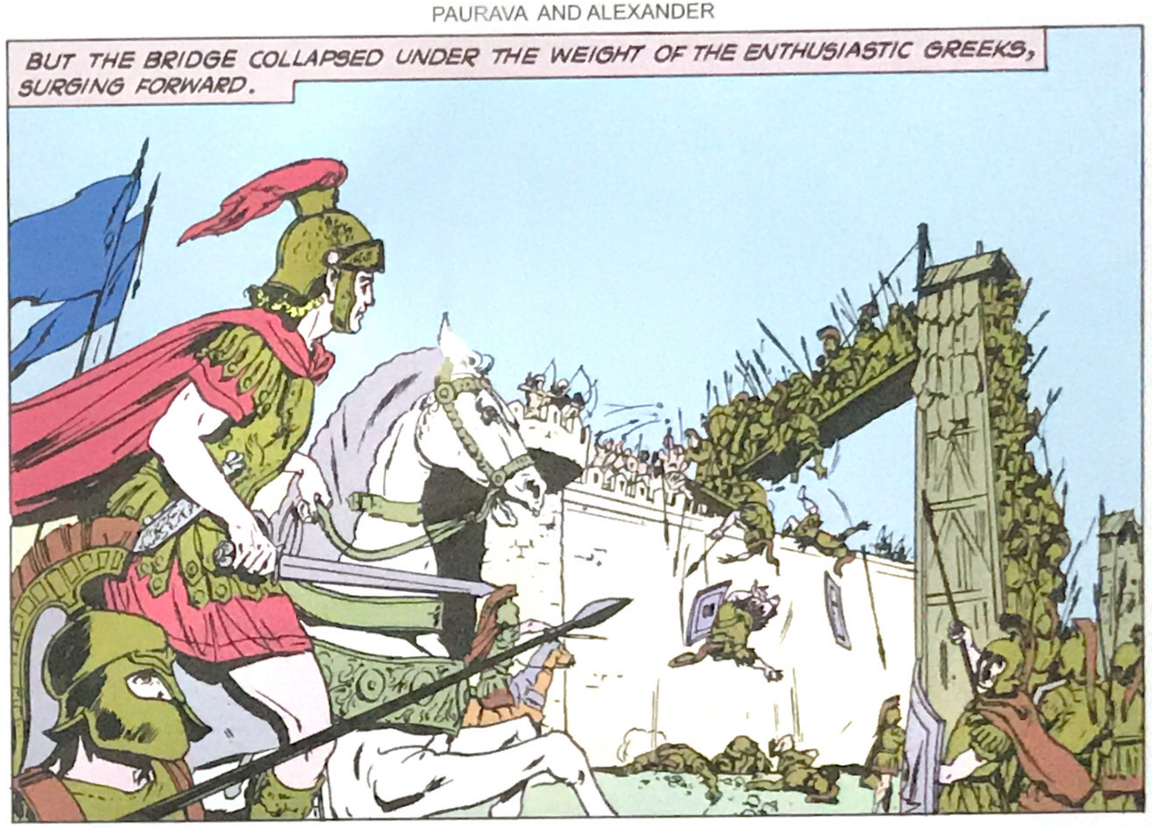


THAT NIGHT ALEXANDER HELD CONSULTATIONS WITH HIS OFFICERS.
THEY ARE DETERMINED NOT TO LET US ENTER THE FORT, AND THEY ARE WELL EQUIPPED TO PREVENT US.
WE'LL HAVE TO TRY A BOLDER METHOD. PUSH THE FIGHTING TOWER FORWARD. WHEN IT REACHES THE WALLS, LOWER THE BRIDGE...

THE NEXT DAY—
WHAT'S THAT?

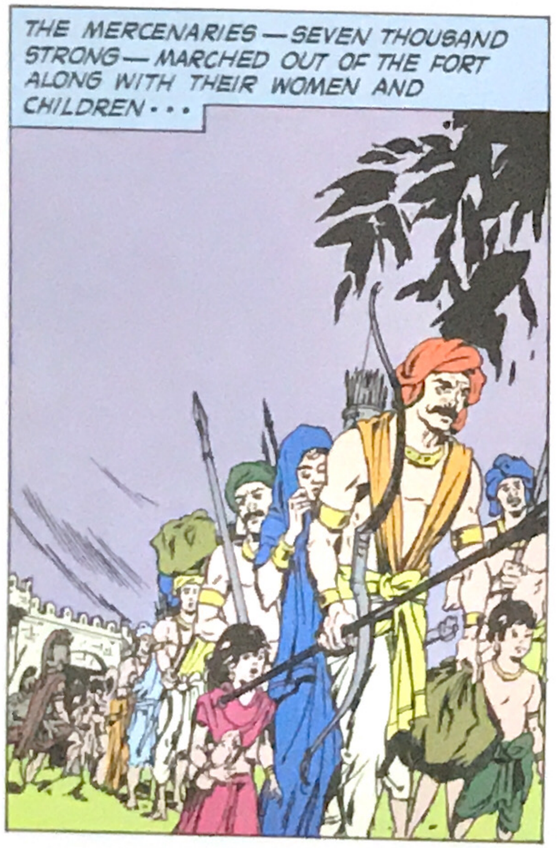

IT'S A BRIDGE! DESTROY IT!

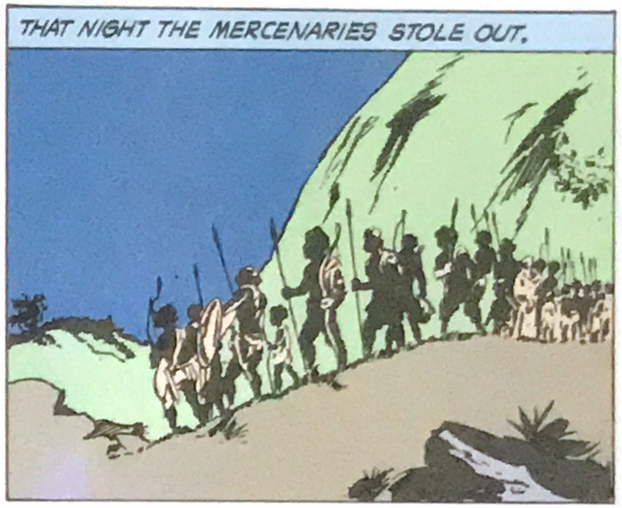

BRAVING STONES AND ARROWS ALEXANDER'S MEN ADVANCED ON THE BRIDGE.

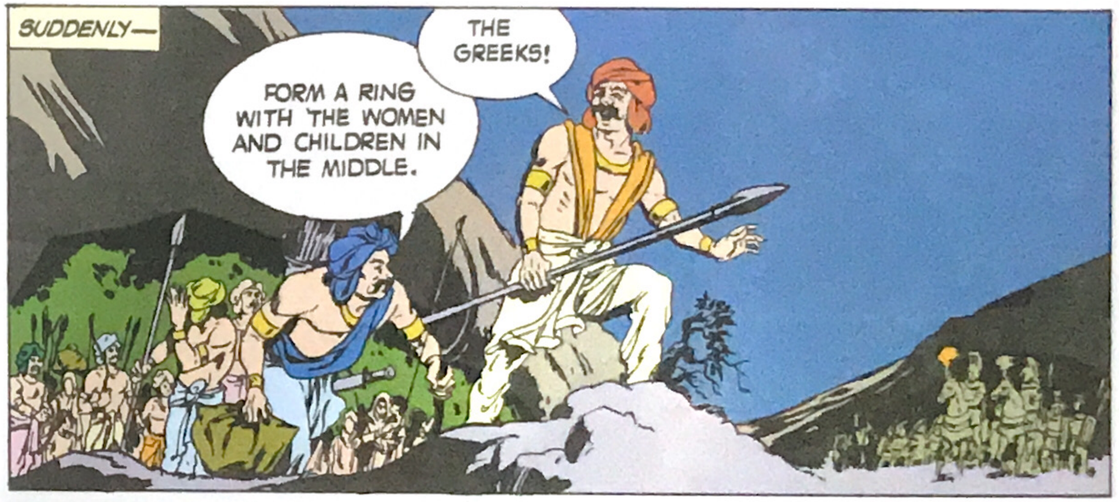

BUT THE BRIDGE COLLAPSED UNDER THE WEIGHT OF THE ENTHUSIASTIC GREEKS, SURGING FORWARD.

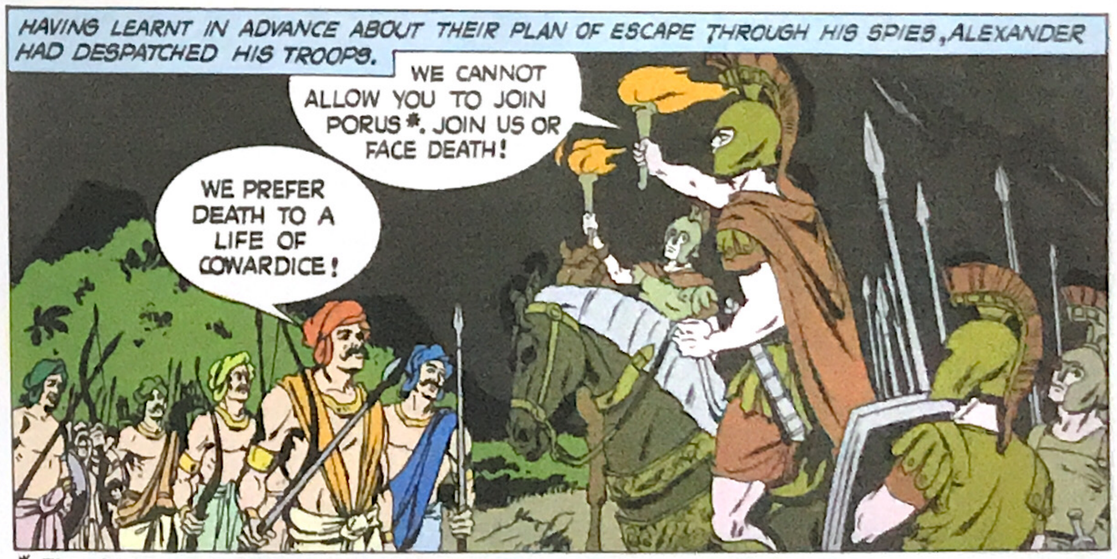
UNDAUNTED BY THIS FAILURE, ALEXANDER REPLACED THE BRIDGE WITH A NEW ONE, AND LED HIS MEN HIMSELF.

A FIERCE BATTLE WAS FOUGHT ON THE BRIDGE.

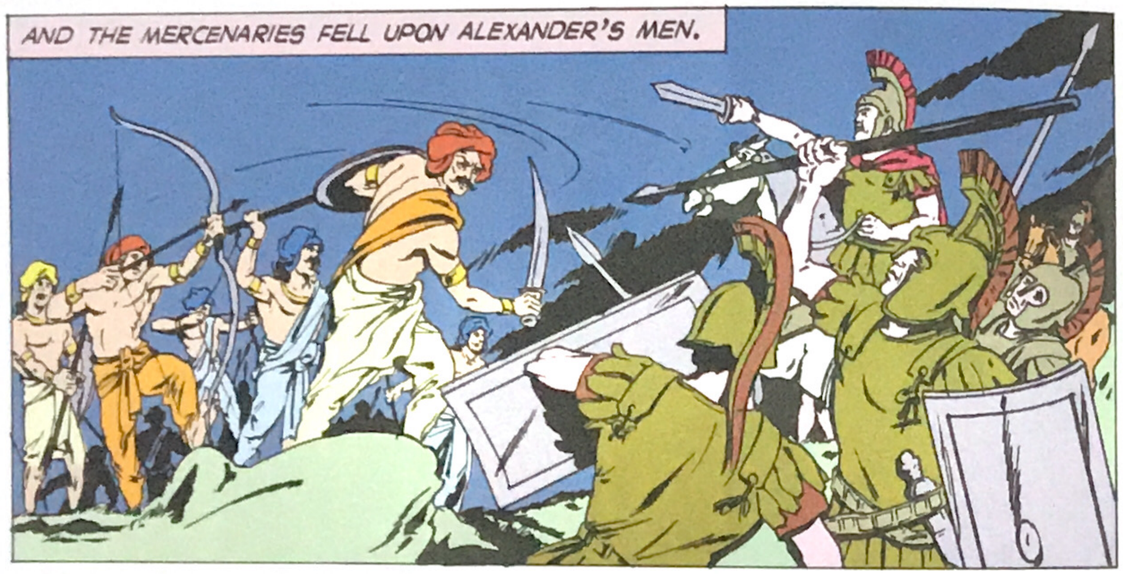


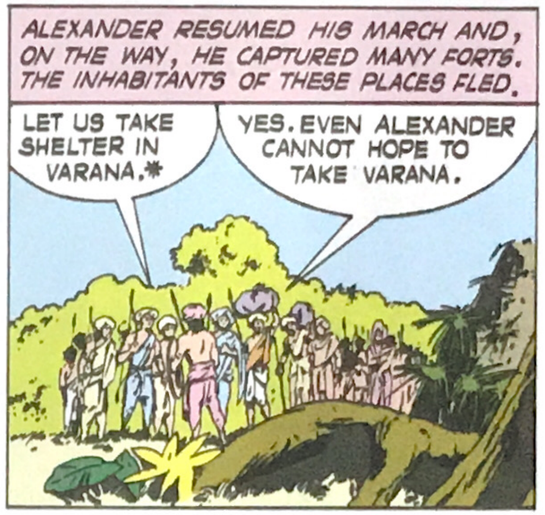






* THE GREEK NAME FOR PAURAVA





* GREEKS REFER TO THIS PLACE AS AORNOS +THE GREEK DEMI-GOD WHOM ALEXANDER CLAIMED AS AN ANCESTOR

PTOLEMY LED HIS MEN ON THE DIFFICULT ROCKY ROUTE TO VARANA...

... WHILE ALEXANDER ANXIOUSLY WAITED FOR THE SIGNAL. AT LAST —
AH! THE BEACON LIGHT! PTOLEMY HAS FOUND A SECURE POSITION.

THE NEXT DAY ALEXANDER AND HIS MEN INCHED FORWARD DESPITE THE CONTINUOUS SHOWER OF ARROWS.
KEEP GOING.

AT LAST THE PEOPLE OF VARANA GAVE UP THE ATTEMPT TO DRIVE BACK THE GREEKS. WHEN ALEXANDER JOINED PTOLEMY —
TROUBLE BEGINS FROM HERE. IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO REACH THE SUMMIT.
WHAT'S STOPPING US?

THE SUMMIT ROCK IS SURROUNDED BY RAVINES...
WE WILL FILL THEM WITH WOOD AND CLIMB TO THE TOP.

AT HIS ORDER, THE SOLDIERS CUT DOWN THE TREES OF THE SURROUNDING FOREST.

MEANWHILE, HIS GENERALS APPROACHED ALEXANDER.
SIR, WE WOULD REQUEST YOU NOT TO ENDANGER YOUR LIFE BY TAKING PART IN THIS OPERATION.
I WILL TRY NOT TO.

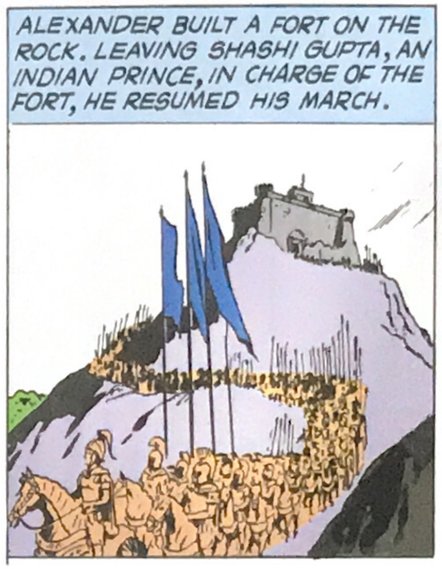
BUT WHEN THE TRUMPETS SOUNDED GIVING THE SIGNAL TO START, ALEXANDER WAS THE FIRST ONE TO LIFT THE TRUNK OF A TREE...

...AND THROW IT INTO THE RAVINE.
HURRAH!

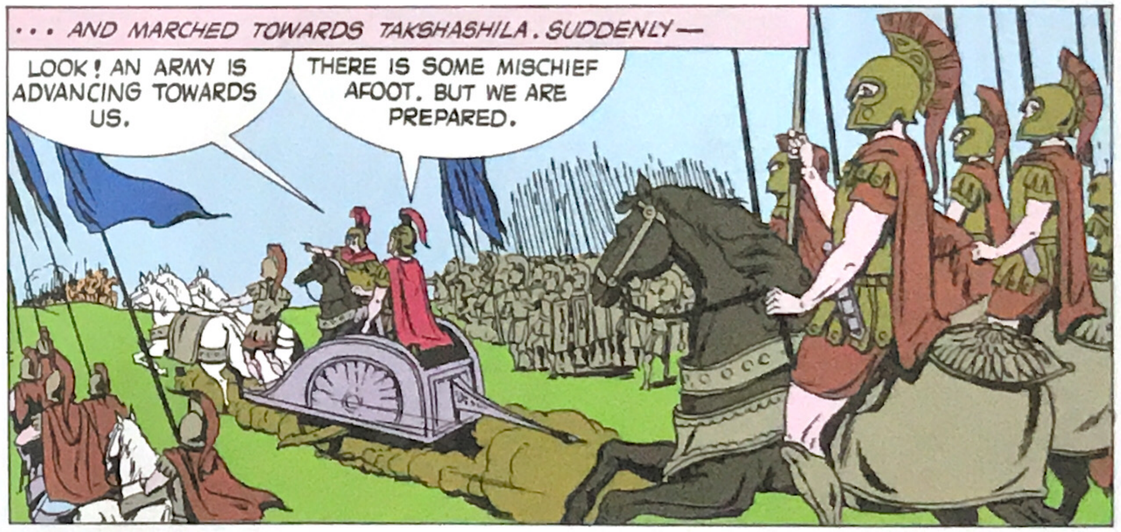
THE GREEKS WORKED WITHOUT REST AND ALL THE RAVINES WERE FILLED.
NOW THE ROAD TO AORNOS IS OPEN TO US.

THEN THE PEOPLE OF VARANA BEGAN NEGOTIATIONS WITH ALEXANDER.
SIR, THE NEGOTIATIONS ARE BUT A COVER TO ESCAPE.
LET THEM ESCAPE. WE WILL MOVE IN WHEN THEY LEAVE.

WHEN THEY FLED, ALEXANDER WAS THE FIRST TO SCALE THE ROCK AND REACH THE SUMMIT.

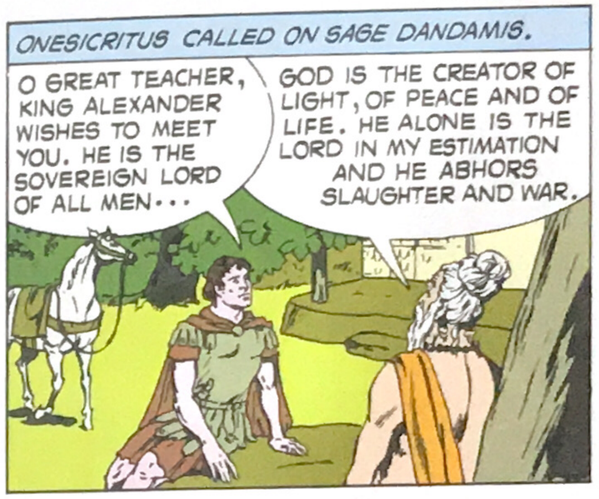

ALEXANDER BUILT A FORT ON THE ROCK. LEAVING SHASHI GUPTA, AN INDIAN PRINCE, IN CHARGE OF THE FORT, HE RESUMED HIS MARCH.

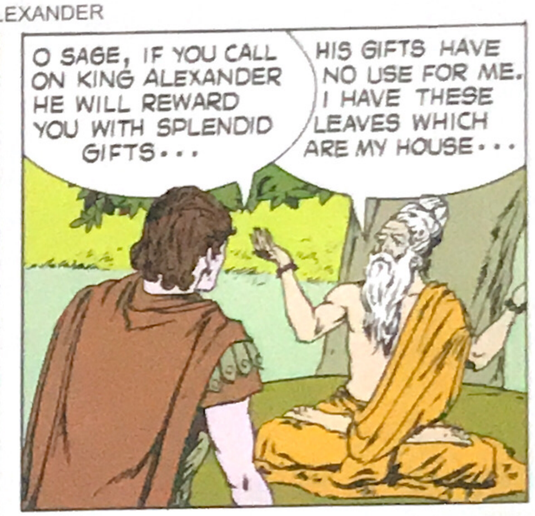
ALEXANDER AND HIS MEN CROSSED THE RIVER SINDHU ON A BRIDGE OF BOATS...

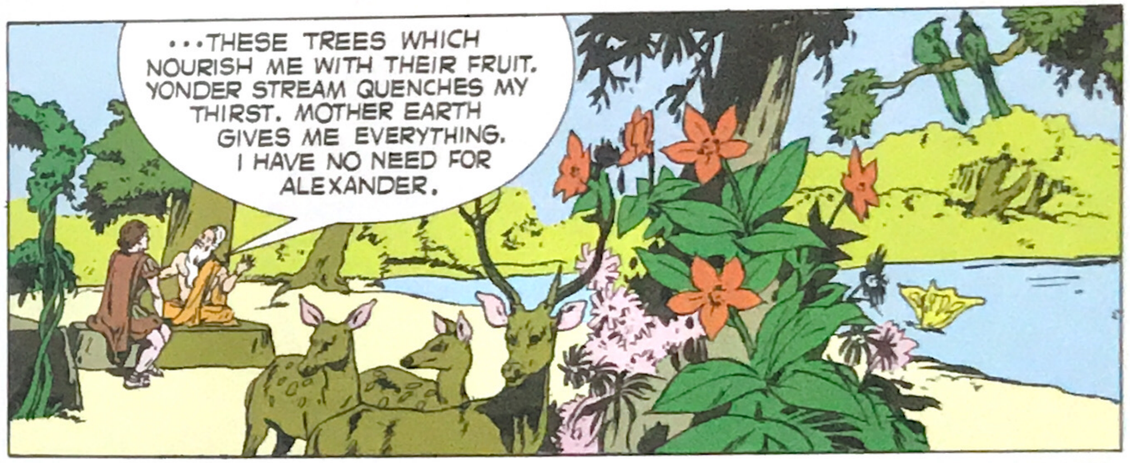

...AND MARCHED TOWARDS TAKSHASHILA. SUDDENLY—
LOOK! AN ARMY IS ADVANCING TOWARDS US.
THERE IS SOME MISCHIEF AFOOT. BUT WE ARE PREPARED.

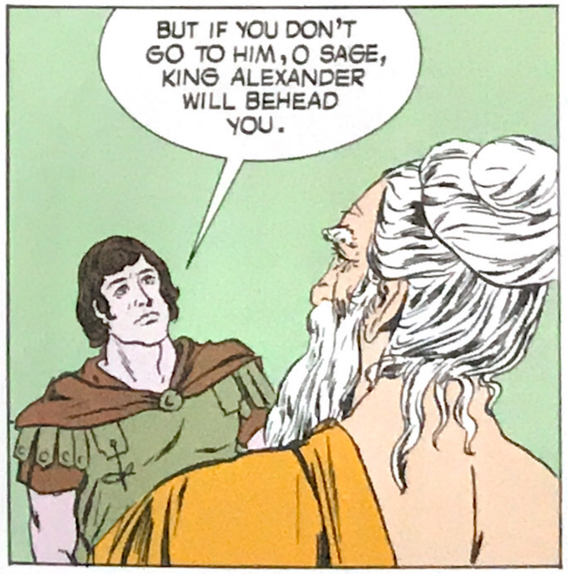
IT'S AMBHI!

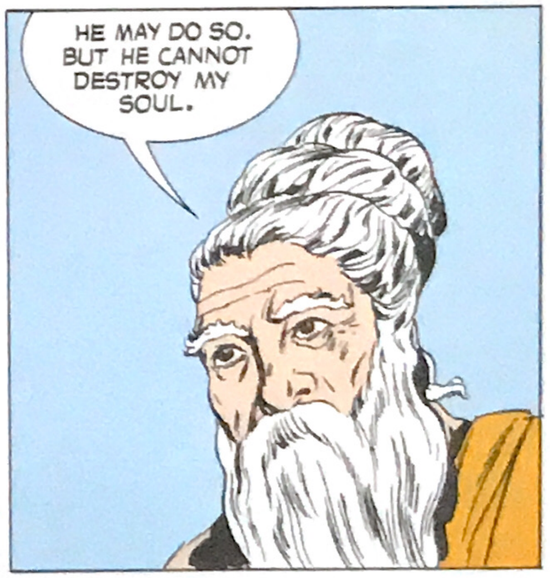
* THE GREEK NAME OF AN INDIAN SAGE



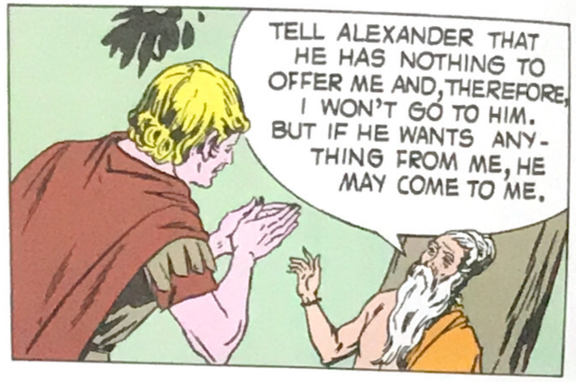


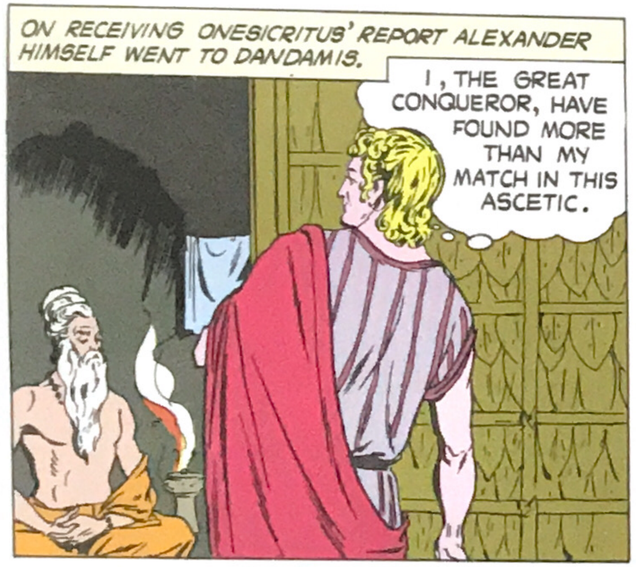


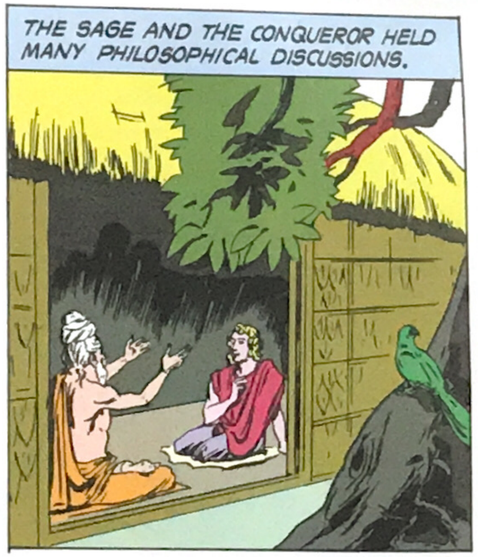


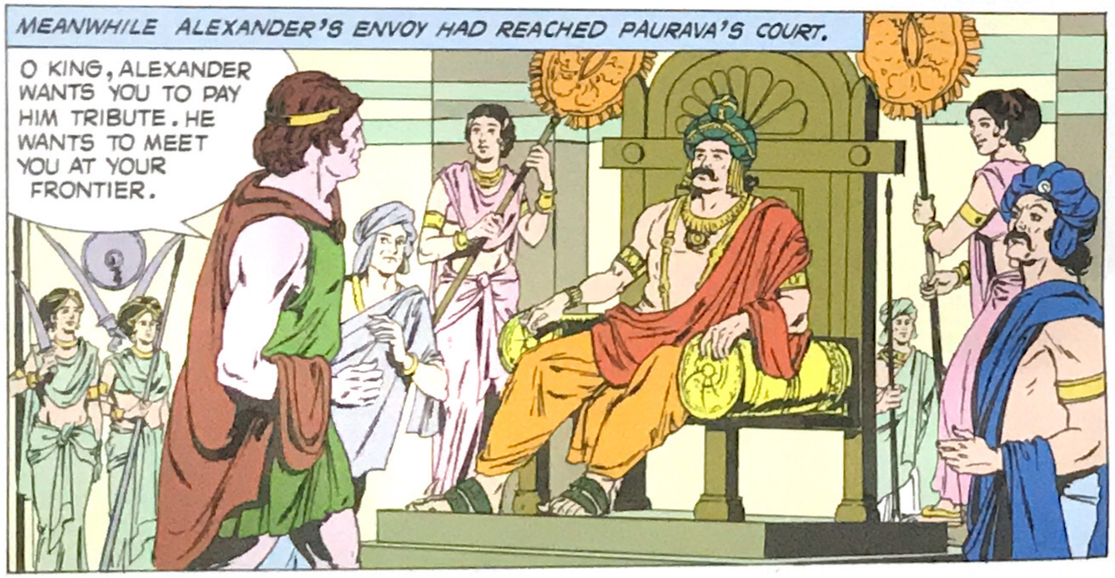


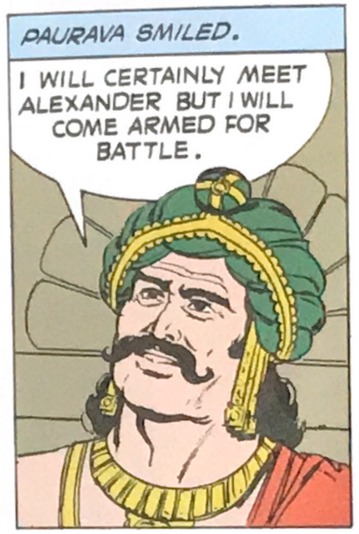
YOUR THREATS ARE POWERLESS AGAINST US ASCETICS, SINCE WE NEITHER LOVE GOLD NOR FEAR DEATH.

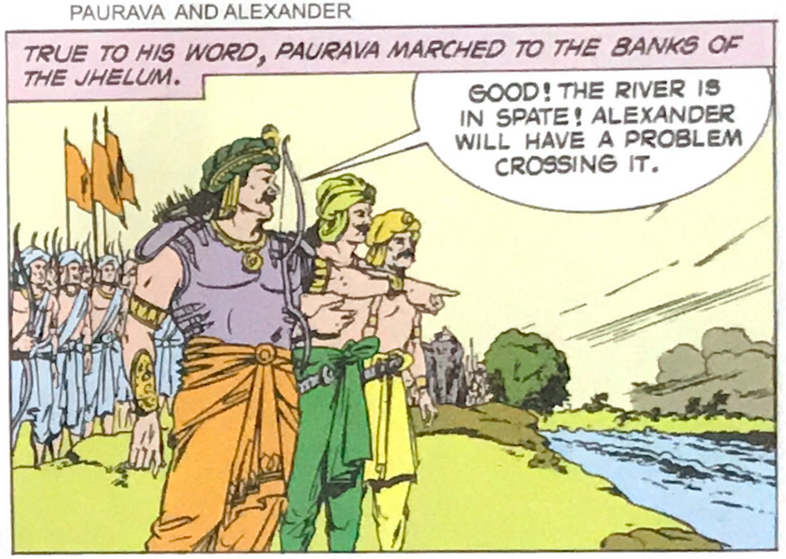

TELL ALEXANDER THAT HE HAS NOTHING TO OFFER ME AND, THEREFORE, I WON'T GO TO HIM. BUT IF HE WANTS ANYTHING FROM ME, HE MAY COME TO ME.

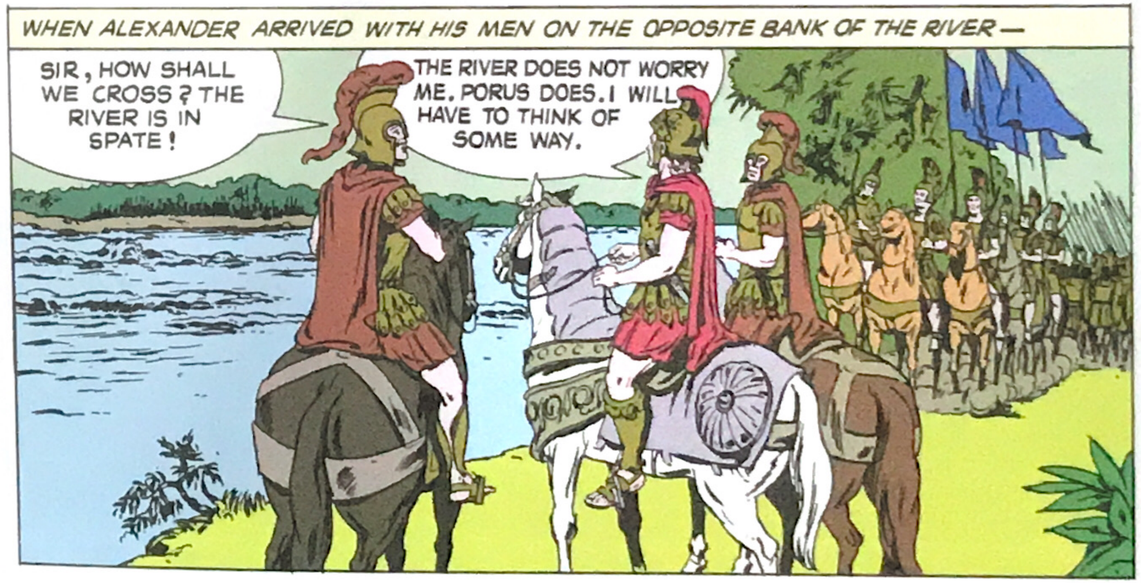

ON RECEIVING ONESICRITUS' REPORT ALEXANDER HIMSELF WENT TO DANDAMIS.
I, THE GREAT CONQUEROR, HAVE FOUND MORE THAN MY MATCH IN THIS ASCETIC.


THE SAGE AND THE CONQUEROR HELD MANY PHILOSOPHICAL DISCUSSIONS.


MEANWHILE ALEXANDER'S ENVOY HAD REACHED PAURAVA'S COURT.
O KING, ALEXANDER WANTS YOU TO PAY HIM TRIBUTE. HE WANTS TO MEET YOU AT YOUR FRONTIER.


PAURAVA SMILED.
I WILL CERTAINLY MEET ALEXANDER BUT I WILL COME ARMED FOR BATTLE.


TRUE TO HIS WORD, PAURAVA MARCHED TO THE BANKS OF THE JHELUM.
GOOD! THE RIVER IS IN SPATE! ALEXANDER WILL HAVE A PROBLEM CROSSING IT.

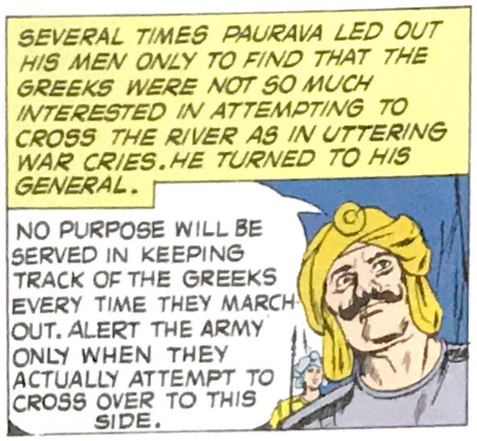

WHEN ALEXANDER ARRIVED WITH HIS MEN ON THE OPPOSITE BANK OF THE RIVER—
SIR, HOW SHALL WE CROSS? THE RIVER IS IN SPATE!
THE RIVER DOES NOT WORRY ME. PORUS DOES. I WILL HAVE TO THINK OF SOME WAY.

THAT NIGHT PAURAVA HEARD A LOUD CLAMOUR.
ALEXANDER IS ATTEMPTING TO CROSS THE RIVER!

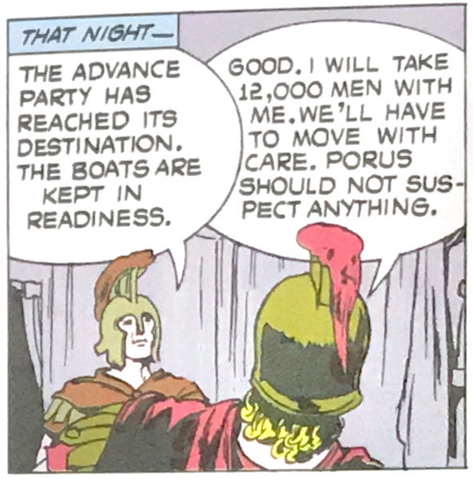
EVEN AS PAURAVA RUSHED OUT OF HIS TENT, HIS GENERALS JOINED HIM.
MY LORD, THE GREEKS ARE MARCHING DOWNSTREAM. WE CAN HEAR THE NOISE.
THEN OUR MEN WILL MARCH IN THE DIRECTION OF THE NOISE, ON THIS SIDE OF THE RIVER.

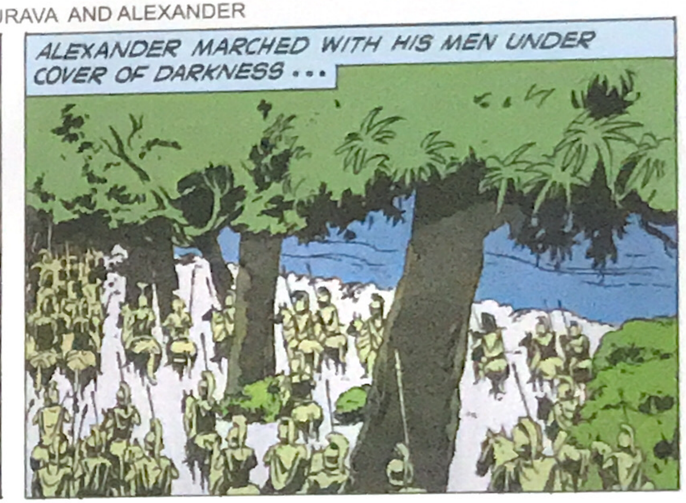
PAURAVA LED HIS MEN OUT.

THEY ARE MAKING A TERRIFIC NOISE, BUT NO ATTEMPT TO CROSS.
THEY DARE NOT, NOW THAT WE ARE HERE.
PAURAVA RETURNED TO HIS CAMP.


SEVERAL TIMES PAURAVA LED OUT HIS MEN ONLY TO FIND THAT THE GREEKS WERE NOT SO MUCH INTERESTED IN ATTEMPTING TO CROSS THE RIVER AS IN UTTERING WAR CRIES. HE TURNED TO HIS GENERAL.
NO PURPOSE WILL BE SERVED IN KEEPING TRACK OF THE GREEKS EVERY TIME THEY MARCH OUT. ALERT THE ARMY ONLY WHEN THEY ACTUALLY ATTEMPT TO CROSS OVER TO THIS SIDE.

A FEW DAYS LATER AT ALEXANDER'S CAMP—
PORUS NO LONGER MAKES ANY COUNTER MOVEMENT WHEN OUR MEN MARCH OUT.
GOOD, KRATEROS. WE HAVE LULLED HIS SUSPICIONS.


THAT NIGHT—
THE ADVANCE PARTY HAS REACHED ITS DESTINATION. THE BOATS ARE KEPT IN READINESS.
GOOD. I WILL TAKE 12,000 MEN WITH ME. WE'LL HAVE TO MOVE WITH CARE. PORUS SHOULD NOT SUSPECT ANYTHING.

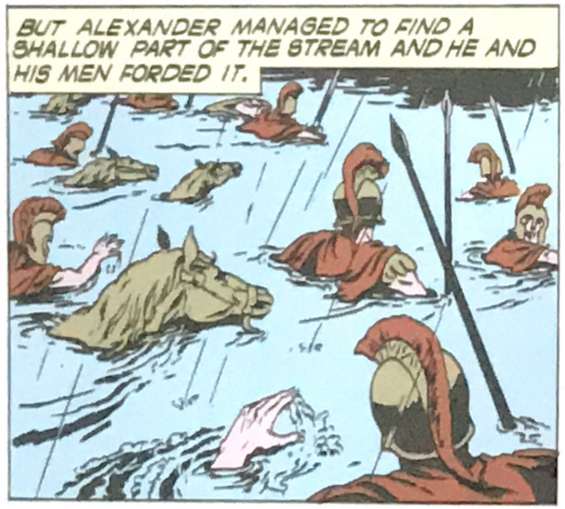

ALEXANDER MARCHED WITH HIS MEN UNDER COVER OF DARKNESS . . .

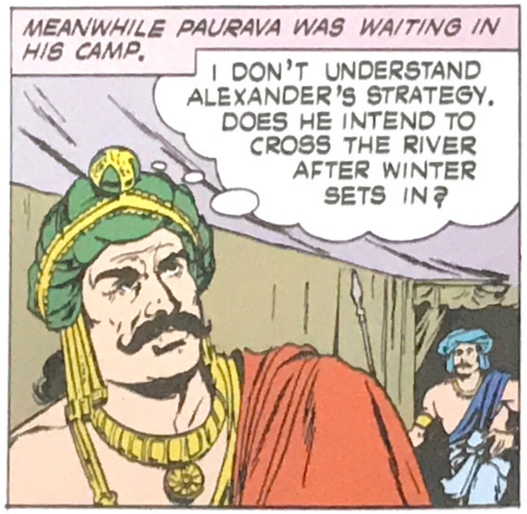
. . . AND REACHED THE PLACE, SIXTEEN MILES AWAY, WHERE HE INTENDED TO CROSS. FORTUNATELY FOR HIM AT THAT MOMENT A THUNDERSTORM BROKE OUT.
FORTUNE SMILES ON US. THE THUNDER WILL DROWN THE NOISE WE MAKE WHILE CROSSING.

ALEXANDER USED RAFTS COVERED WITH HIDE TO CROSS THE RIVER.

THE GREEKS LANDED ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE RIVER. IT CONTINUED TO RAIN. MANY SOLDIERS FELL DEAD, STRUCK BY LIGHTNING.

AS THEY MARCHED FORWARD BRAVING RAIN, THUNDER AND LIGHTNING—
WHAT! A STREAM AGAIN!

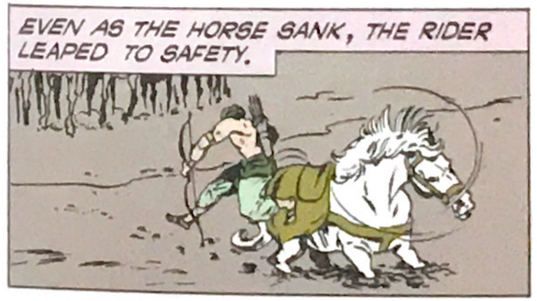

BUT ALEXANDER MANAGED TO FIND A SHALLOW PART OF THE STREAM AND HE AND HIS MEN FORDED IT.


MEANWHILE PAURAVA WAS WAITING IN HIS CAMP.
I DON'T UNDERSTAND ALEXANDER'S STRATEGY. DOES HE INTEND TO CROSS THE RIVER AFTER WINTER SETS IN?

THEN A SOLDIER RUSHED IN.
MY LORD, WE SAW THE GREEKS CROSSING THE RIVER NEAR THE PLAIN SIXTEEN MILES FROM HERE.
WHAT!

PAURAVA SENT FOR HIS SON.
RUSH TO THE PLAIN WITH YOUR MEN. ALEXANDER MUST NOT BE ALLOWED TO ADVANCE FURTHER.
I WILL START AT ONCE, FATHER.

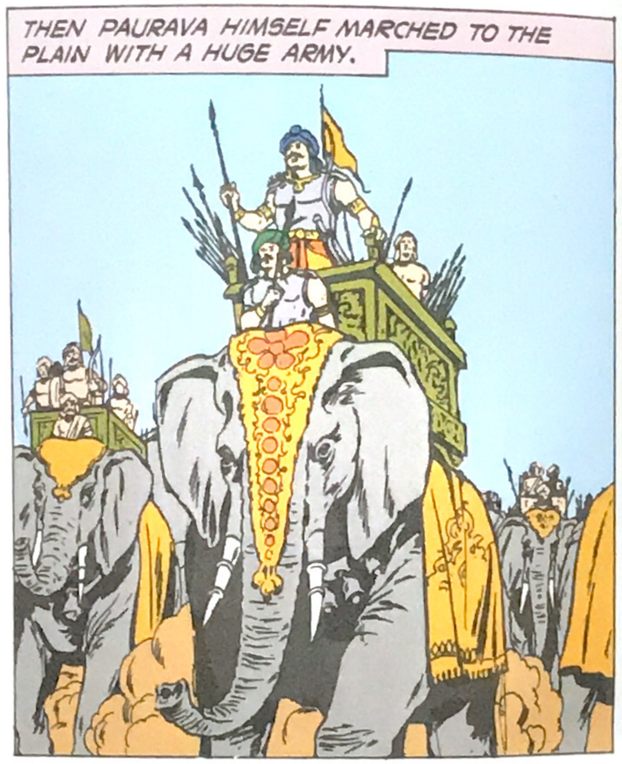
PAURAVA'S SON RODE WITH HIS MEN. SUDDENLY—
QUICKSAND! STOP!

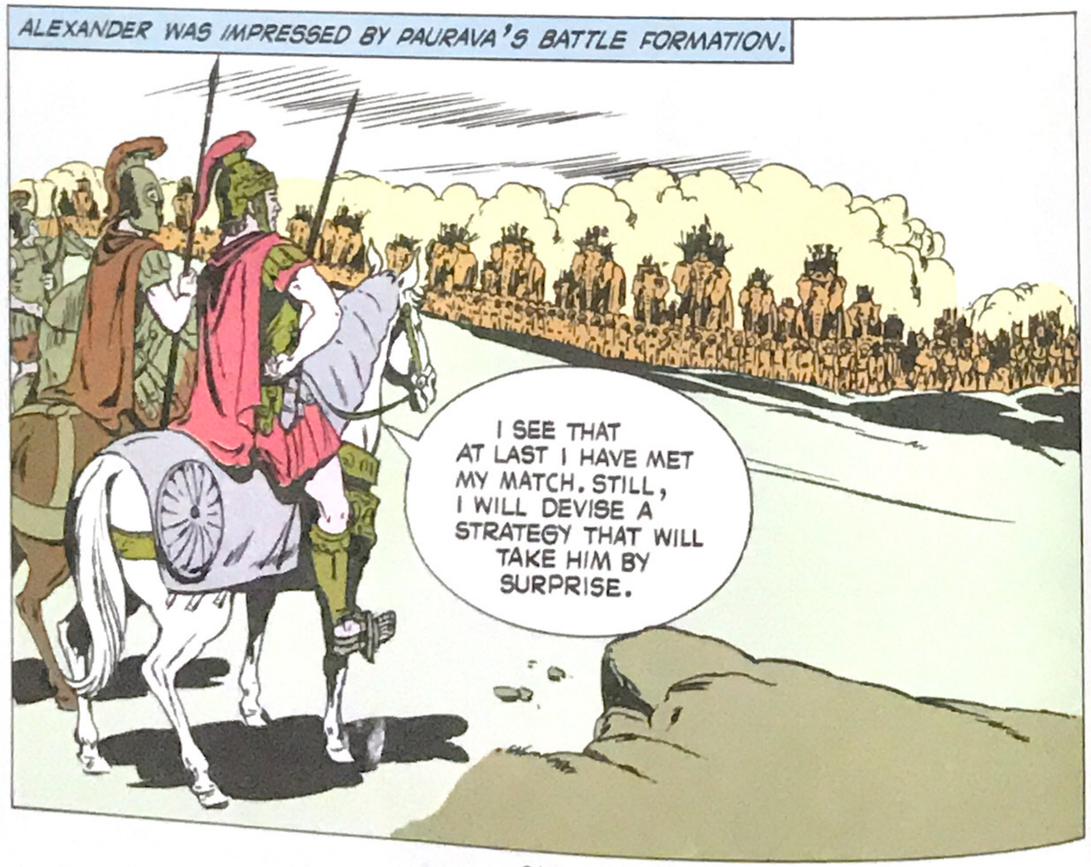

EVEN AS THE HORSE SANK, THE RIDER LEAPED TO SAFETY.

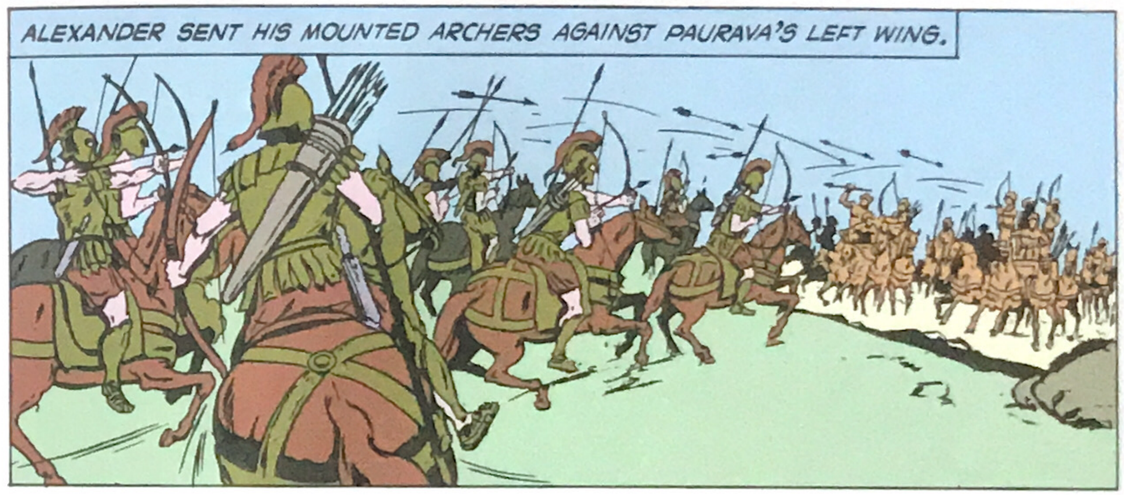
WE WILL HAVE TO MAKE A DETOUR.

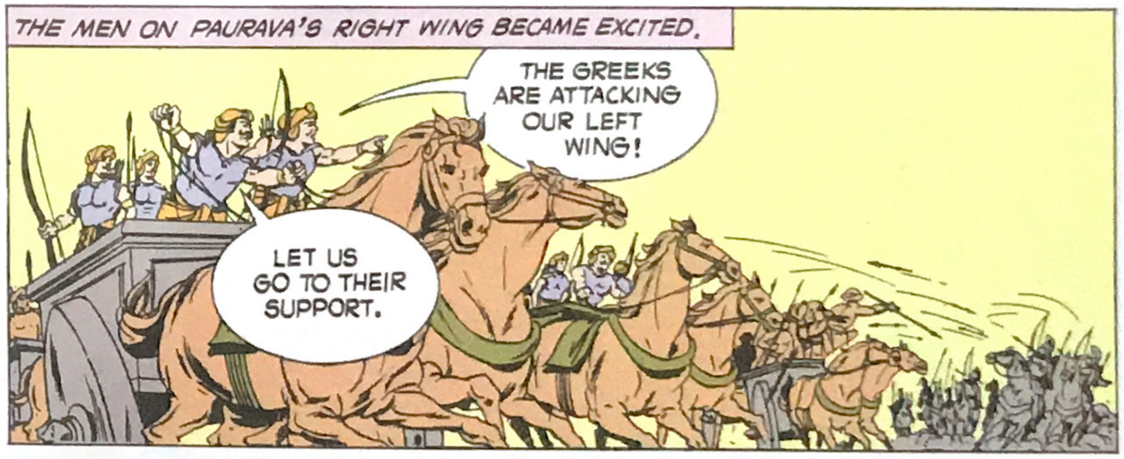
THUS THE PRINCE WAS DELAYED IN REACHING THE PLAIN. BY THEN ALEXANDER'S MEN HAD ALL CROSSED OVER.
HERE COME THE FORCES OF PORUS. BE READY.

THE TWO ARMIES MET.
THE PRINCE HAS BEEN KILLED.
LET US FLEE!


THEN PAURAVA HIMSELF MARCHED TO THE PLAIN WITH A HUGE ARMY.

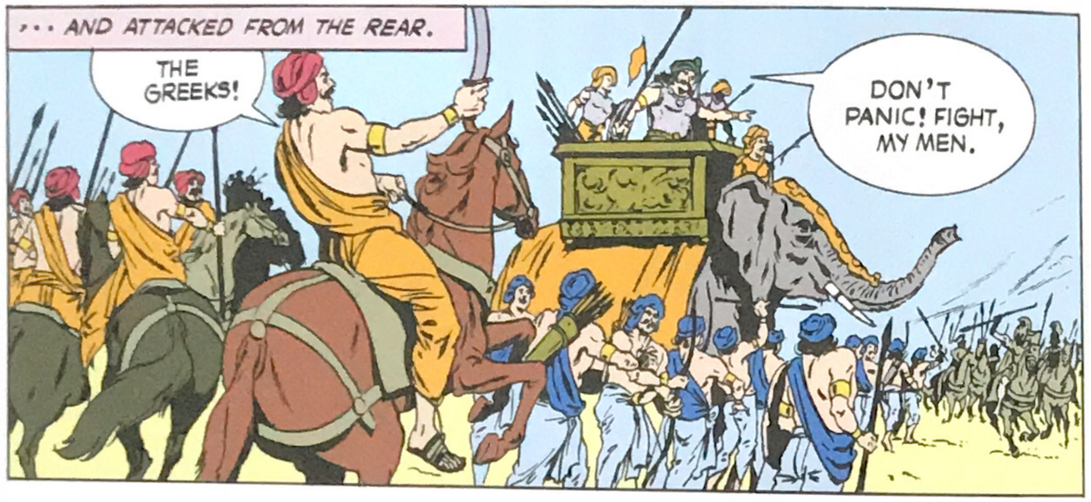

ALEXANDER WAS IMPRESSED BY PAURAVA'S BATTLE FORMATION.
I SEE THAT AT LAST I HAVE MET MY MATCH. STILL, I WILL DEVISE A STRATEGY THAT WILL TAKE HIM BY SURPRISE.


ALEXANDER SENT HIS MOUNTED ARCHERS AGAINST PAURAVA'S LEFT WING.

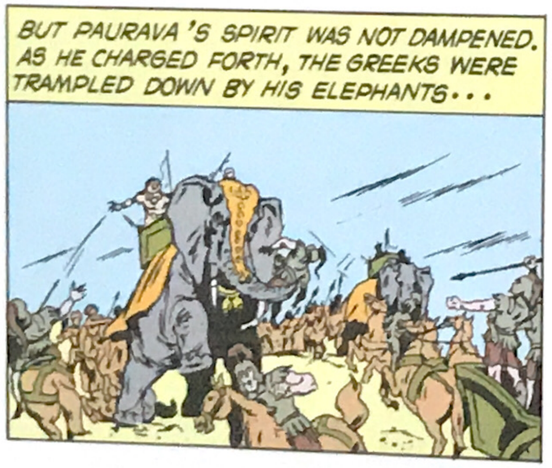

THE MEN ON PAURAVA'S RIGHT WING BECAME EXCITED.
THE GREEKS ARE ATTACKING OUR LEFT WING!
LET US GO TO THEIR SUPPORT.

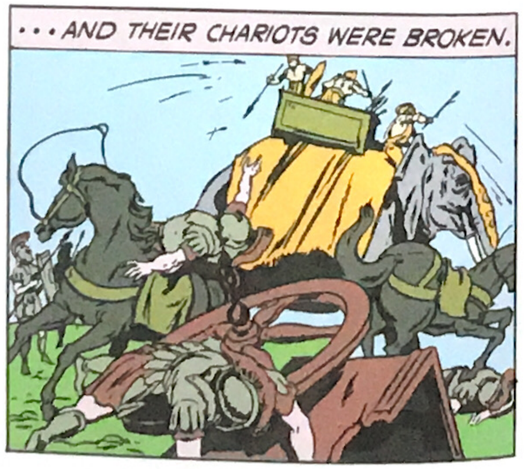
AS PAURAVA'S RIGHT WING SWUNG OVER TO THE LEFT —
BE QUICK KOINOS, THIS IS YOUR CHANCE.

THE GREEKS UNDER KOINOS SWEPT PAST THE FRONT OF PAURAVA'S ARMY, GALLOPED ROUND ITS RIGHT WING...

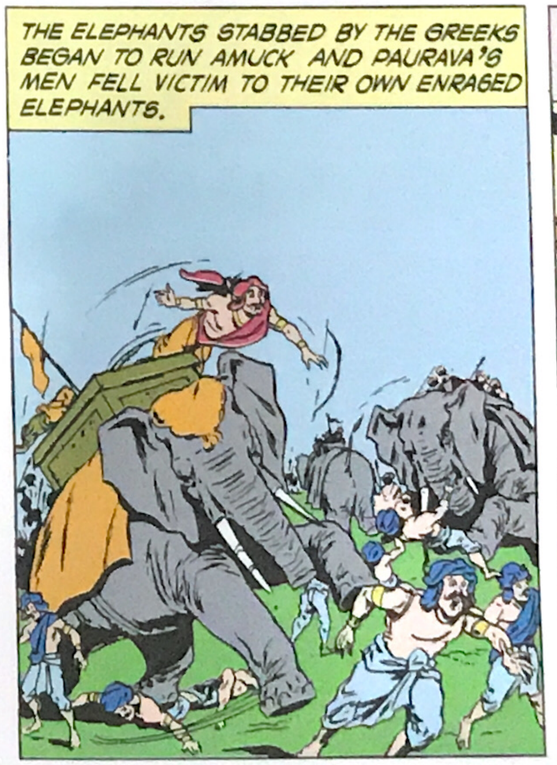

. . . AND ATTACKED FROM THE REAR.
THE GREEKS!
DON'T PANIC! FIGHT, MY MEN.

IT HAD RAINED HEAVILY THE NIGHT BEFORE. PAURAVA'S ARCHERS FOUND IT DIFFICULT TO REST THEIR LONG BOWS ON THE SLIPPERY GROUND.
OH GOD! WHAT A DAY TO CHOOSE FOR A BATTLE!
IF ONLY IT HAD NOT RAINED LAST NIGHT!


BUT PAURAVA 'S SPIRIT WAS NOT DAMPENED. AS HE CHARGED FORTH, THE GREEKS WERE TRAMPLED DOWN BY HIS ELEPHANTS. . .

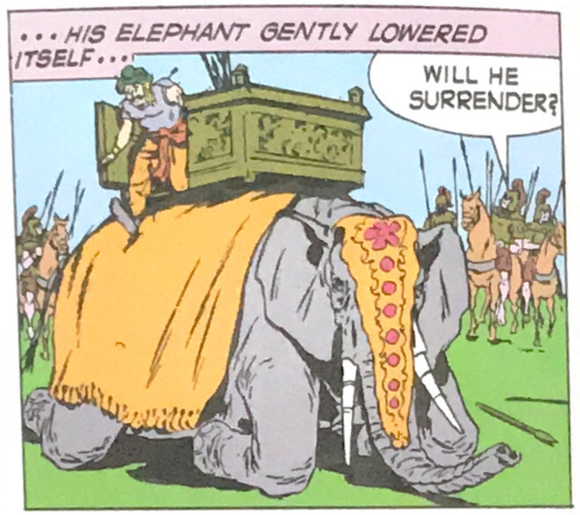

. . . AND THEIR CHARIOTS WERE BROKEN.

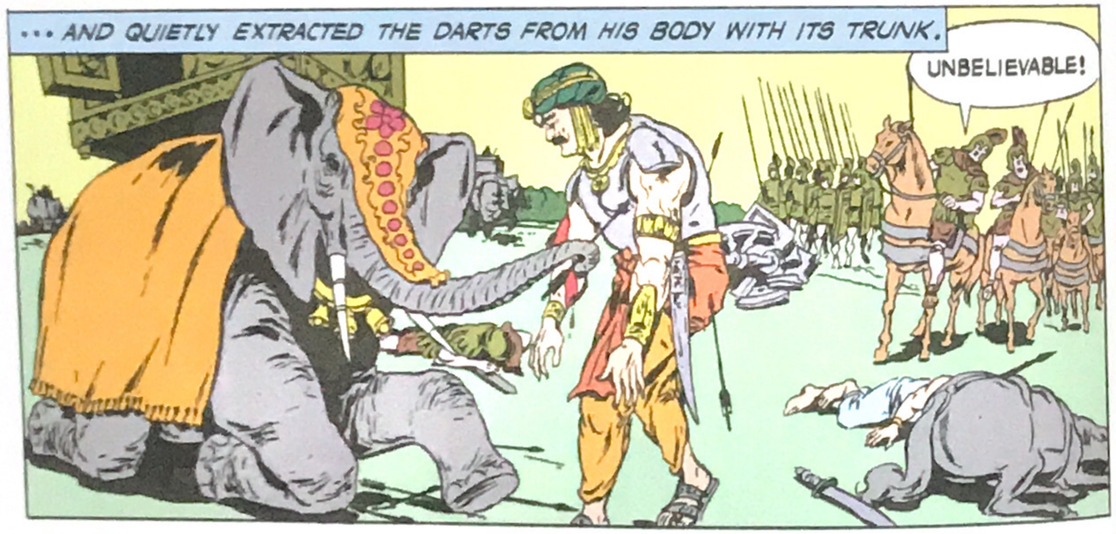
THE GREEKS BECAME PANICKY AT THE SIGHT OF THE ELEPHANTS.
STAB THE BEASTS! KILL THEIR RIDERS!

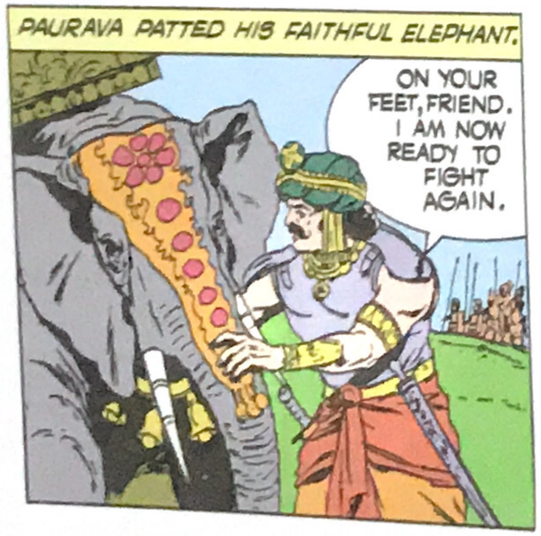

THE ELEPHANTS STABBED BY THE GREEKS BEGAN TO RUN AMUCK AND PAURAVA'S MEN FELL VICTIM TO THEIR OWN ENRAGED ELEPHANTS.

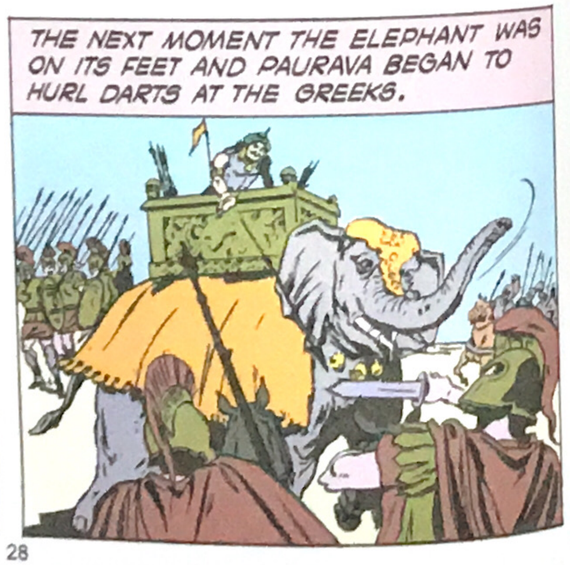
PAURAVA CONTINUED TO FIGHT, ALTHOUGH SEVERAL OF HIS MEN PANICKED AND DESERTED HIM.

WHEN PAURAVA WAS ABOUT TO FAINT BECAUSE OF THE NUMBER OF WOUNDS HE HAD RECEIVED . . .


. . . HIS ELEPHANT GENTLY LOWERED ITSELF . . .
WILL HE SURRENDER?

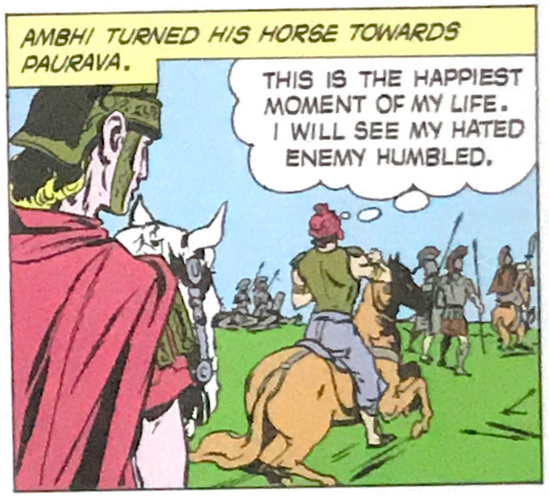

. . . AND QUIETLY EXTRACTED THE DARTS FROM HIS BODY WITH ITS TRUNK.
UNBELIEVABLE!


PAURAVA PATTED HIS FAITHFUL ELEPHANT.
ON YOUR FEET, FRIEND. I AM NOW READY TO FIGHT AGAIN.


THE NEXT MOMENT THE ELEPHANT WAS ON ITS FEET AND PAURAVA BEGAN TO HURL DARTS AT THE GREEKS.

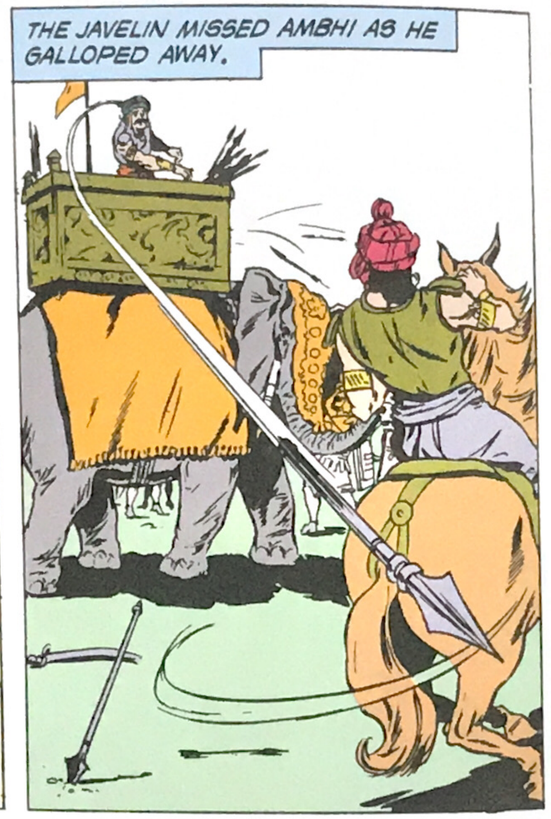
ALEXANDER WATCHED THE DESPERATE FIGHT PUT UP BY PAURAVA.
HE IS ONE OF THE BRAVEST MEN I HAVE EVER KNOWN. HOW LONG WILL HE CONTINUE TO FIGHT US? HE MUST BE SAVED.

ALEXANDER TURNED TO AMBHI WHO WAS BY HIS SIDE.
GO TO PORUS AND ASK HIM TO SURRENDER.


AMBHI TURNED HIS HORSE TOWARDS PAURAVA.
THIS IS THE HAPPIEST MOMENT OF MY LIFE. I WILL SEE MY HATED ENEMY HUMBLED.

O PAURAVA, SURRENDER TO ALEXANDER . . .

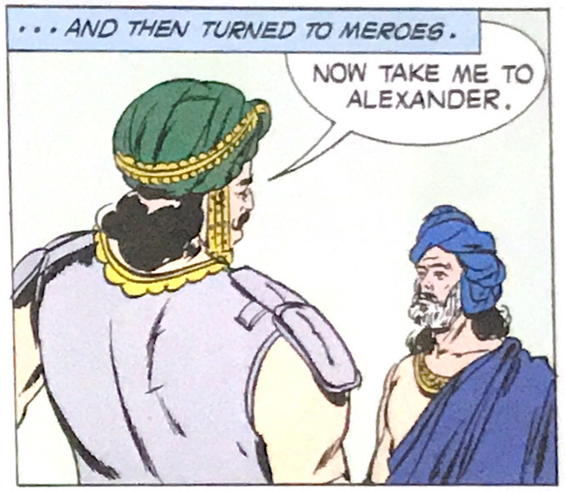
WOUNDED AS HE WAS, PAURAVA LIFTED HIS HUGE JAVELIN.
YOU COWARD!


THE JAVELIN MISSED AMBHI AS HE GALLOPED AWAY.

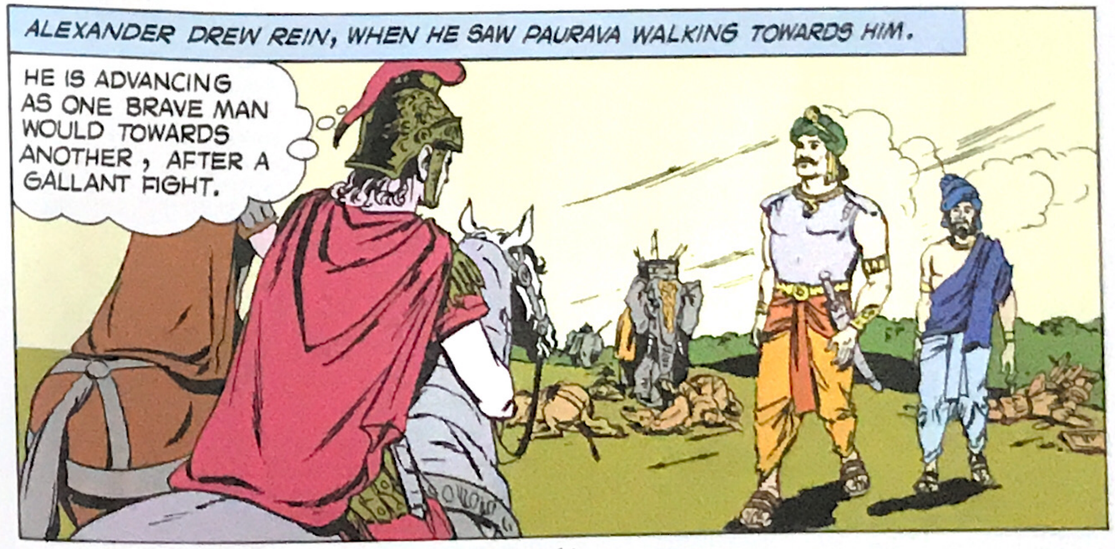
THEN MEROES, AN OLD FRIEND, CAME TO PAURAVA.
PAURAVA, TAKE THE OUTCOME OF THE WAR SPORTINGLY. MEET ALEXANDER.

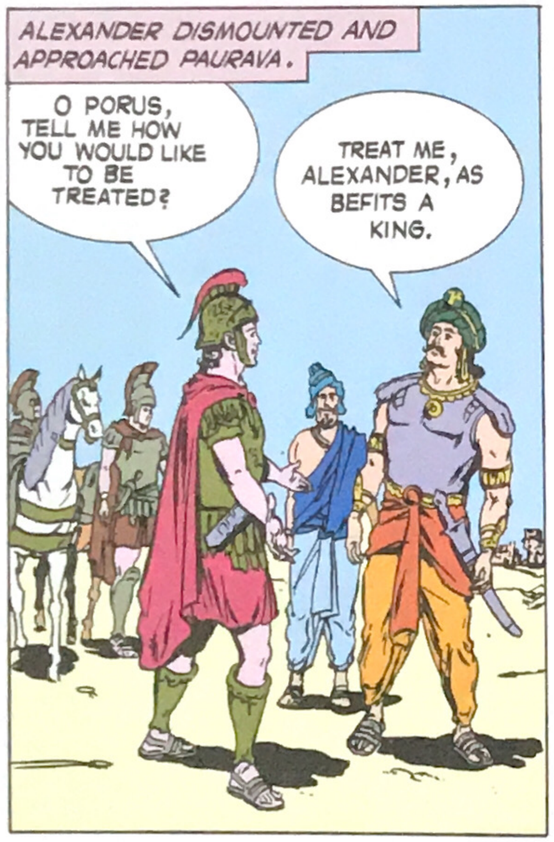
PAURAVA DISMOUNTED.
GET ME SOME WATER FIRST.
I WILL GET IT AT ONCE.

PAURAVA REFRESHED HIMSELF WITH THE WATER . . .


. . . AND THEN TURNED TO MEROES.
NOW TAKE ME TO ALEXANDER.

WHEN ALEXANDER WAS INFORMED OF PAURAVA'S DECISION—
I WILL GO AND RECEIVE HIM.


ALEXANDER DREW REIN, WHEN HE SAW PAURAVA WALKING TOWARDS HIM.
HE IS ADVANCING AS ONE BRAVE MAN WOULD TOWARDS ANOTHER, AFTER A GALLANT FIGHT.



WHICH OF THE ACKs HAVE YOU STILL NOT READ?

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